

# Understanding Culture Society and Politics

## Quarter 2 – Module 2: Functions and Importance of Education



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## ***What is It***

In this part of your journey, we provide something for you to read to deepen your understanding about the topic.

Please do it with comprehension to discover knowledge that will help you out in dealing with the next phase of your quest.

### **The Meaning of Education, Types, Functions and its Importance**

#### **The Meaning of Education**

Education [ej-oo-**key**-shuhn], the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/education>). However, education, as a social institution has a different meaning. Dr. William Little (2014) held that **education** is a social institution through which a society's children are taught basic academic knowledge, learning skills, and cultural norms.

Furthermore, the word education is derived from the Latin word “*educare*” which means “to train”, “to rear or bring-up (a child)”. Hence, it plays a significant role in transferring culture and social norms among members of society, in the process of training and various modalities of educating. It enables individual to flourish their personality to withstand the culture and social systems. It will always remain as an essential support pillar in our society.

Hence, Alvin Toffler, an American writer and futurist, is popularly quoted for having said “The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” This marks the highlights of the extensive journey that occurs in the field of education.

## The System of Education in the Philippines

There are two types of education in the Philippines: **the formal and the nonformal**. Formal education refers to the standardized method of hierarchically structured and progressive schooling that corresponds to the general notion of elementary and secondary and tertiary level of education. Yet only the primary and secondary level is compulsory to the students.

In the educational system of the Philippines, the elementary and secondary level is administered and supervised by the Department of Education. Elementary level is composed of kindergarten and six (6) years of primary education. Whereas the secondary contains four (4) years of junior high school and two (2) years of senior high school. Furthermore, the tertiary level is administered and supervised by the Commission on Higher Education. The actual years spent in this level depends on the curriculum of each course.

Nonetheless, the nonformal education refers to an educational activity carried outside the structure of a formal education. According to UNESCO, non-formal education can cover programs contributing to adult and youth literacy and education for out-of-school children, as well as programs on life skills, work skills, and social or cultural development. Thus, this type of education is basically flexible, learner-centered, contextualized and requires learners to participate in every activity. Also, the age of learners in this category is not a necessity. One example is the Alternative Learning System or ALS overseen by the Department of Education. ALS Non-formal Education happens outside the classroom, community-based, usually conducted at community learning centers, barangay multi-purpose hall, libraries or at home, managed by ALS learning facilitators, such as mobile teachers, district ALS Coordinators, instructional managers at an agreed schedule and venue between the learners and facilitators. (<https://www.deped.gov.ph/k-to-12/inclusive-education/about-alternative-learning-system/>)

## The Functions of Education and its Importance

Whether formal or nonformal, education addresses various needs of this society. Education also provides a “productive citizenry” and makes the “self-actualization” possible. Productive citizens are necessary for the improvement of the community. However, self-actualization refers to the desire for self-fulfillment or the tendency of human to become actualized in what he is potentially. Again, education takes a vital part to achieve the self-actualization.

Education has different functions. This consists of socialization, transmission of culture, social integration social placement, and social and cultural innovation and/or preservation.

a) **Socialization.** Socialization is an essential ingredient in creating a society. Since school is an agent of socialization, thus, education helps transform human in becoming literate and recognize its function in the society. Through education as a means of socialization, we also learn social norms, values and culture that are fortified by our teachers, our textbooks, and our classmates as well.

b) **Transmission of Culture.** Through socialization in school (teachers to learners, and learner to learner), the transmission of culture is at the highest possible. Through education, human learn the values, beliefs, and social norms of their culture.

c) **Social Integration.** As the saying goes “nations are built because of education”, this is because education portrays an important role to unify individuals by teaching the common values and social norms.

d) **Social Placement.** It could be a cliché that “all other professions rooted from teachers” though, it is indeed the reality. Education provides a social placement for everyone. It prepares us for the later station of our lives, and, to buy the necessities of life. Now, this makes sense to “productive citizenry” and “self-actualization”

Nonetheless, it is not a secret that education can change one’s life. “Having education in an area helps people think, feel, and behave in a way that contributes to their success, and improves not only their personal satisfaction but also their community” (cited from Al-Shuaibi, Abdulghani, *The Importance of Education*, 2014).

## Legal Provisions of Education: Education as a Human Right

It is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN website:

### **Article 26:**

*(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.*

*(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*

*(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*

In the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article 14:

**Section 1:** *The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.*

**Section 2, Paragraph 2:** *The state shall establish and maintain a system of free public education in the elementary and high school levels. Without limiting the natural right of parents to rear their children, elementary education is compulsory for all children of school age;*

The right to education is fundamental. It is non-discriminatory. Everyone has the right to education regardless of race, ethnicity, social origin, gender, political preferences, or disability. It is also a vital human right in exercising all the other human rights.

Furthermore, it stimulates independence and concession to produce significant development benefits for the country. It is a powerful instrument for economically and socially marginalized individuals away from poverty to become productive citizen of the country. Since education is a human right, every individual has an equal opportunity to participate in an education system.